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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 08/20/07

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Abe diplomacy:

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Political scene:

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Articles:

- 1) Japan-China joint poll: More than half see China's sentiment toward Japan as "improved"

TOKYO (Page 3) (Abridged)  
August 18, 2007

BEIJING-Genron NPO, a nonprofit organization made up of political, business, and opinion leaders, conducted a joint public opinion survey with Beijing University in Japan and China and released its results yesterday. In Japan, 66% answered that their impressions of China were "not good." In China, however, the negative figure about Japan was 36%, showing an improvement of 20 percentage points. Asked about changes over the past year as well, more than half of those polled in China answered that their impressions of Japan have improved. Japan and China have now resumed communications between their top leaders. In response, China's public sentiment toward Japan has changed for the better.

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The survey was conducted in May. This year's survey was the third one. Answers were obtained from 1,000 persons in Japan and 1,609 persons in China.

- 2) Prime Minister Abe leaves for three-nation Asian tour; Attempts to firm up government through diplomacy, but LDP members interested in posts in reshuffled cabinet

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 20, 2008

Jakarta, Yuji Kihara

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe arrived yesterday afternoon in Jakarta, the first city of his Asian tour of three countries -- Indonesia, India, and Malaysia. He intends to rebuild his administration through his first overseas tour of the three Asian countries since his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) suffered a devastating defeat in the July House of Councillors election. However, many LDP lawmakers are interested in the reshuffling of the cabinet and party executive posts, which Abe is expected to carry out after he returns. It will be difficult for the prime minister to regain his hold over the party just through diplomatic achievements. He is therefore probably considering the selections of new cabinet and LDP executive members.

Prior to his departure on the morning of Aug. 19, Abe expressed his determination ahead of a visit to India to reporters in front of his official residence, saying: "Relations between Japan and India are bilateral relations that have the most hidden potential."

Abe's surprise visits to China and South Korea last October improved relations with the two countries that had been strained under the administration of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. In the Group of Eight Summit in Heiligendamm, Germany, in June, Abe took the lead in discussions on global warming. Since he has confidence in his diplomatic achievements so far, he plans to address during his overseas trip this time his stance of placing importance on relations with Asian countries, as well as on environmental measures.

In India, where will arrive on Aug. 21, Abe is expected to release a joint statement on measures to prevent global warming along with his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh. With an eye on the 2009 G-8 Summit in Japan, in which global warming will be a major topic of discussion, he apparently will play up his enthusiasm to stay in office.

After returning home, Abe will have a tightly packed schedule, including a visit to Japan by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and participation in the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) to be held in Sydney, as well as in the UN General Assembly.

His trips to the three Asian countries had been decided ahead of the July Upper House election. It is difficult for Abe to produce achievements on the domestic political front for the time being, since his ruling coalition has handed its control in the upper chamber to the largest opposition party, Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan). A senior ruling camp member made a cool comment: "Diplomacy is the only arena in which Abe can display his presence."

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Contrary to Abe's enthusiasm, many in the LDP are interested only in the upcoming reshuffling of the cabinet and the LDP executive posts. Since mid-August, junior and mid-level lawmakers have called on Abe. The dominant view is that position-hunting moves have already started. Senior members of the LDP factions will hold meetings to exchange views on the reshuffle.

3) Japan-India joint statement to specify India's cooperation in creating post-Kyoto framework, energy conservation Singh

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Full)  
August 19, 2007

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh are scheduled to issue a joint statement on environmental protection and energy on August 22. The statement will specify Japan's proposal for halving greenhouse gases by 2050 and an international effort for creating a new framework to prevent global warming in cooperation with the United States, China, and India. The statement will also mention greater cooperation in energy conservation and the stockpiling of oil.

India is a major greenhouse gas emitter along with the United States and China. Japan eyes India's assurance to actively combat global warming with the aim of facilitating discussion at next year's G8 Summit at Lake Toya, which is expected to focus on an effort for a post-Kyoto framework.

Abe and Singh are scheduled to release the joint statement following their summit talks on August 22. The statement will focus on greater cooperation in two areas: the prevention of global warming and energy. In preventing global warming, the statement will specify India's commitment to an effort for creating a new framework that will replace the Kyoto Protocol, scheduled to expire 2012.

India and China fear that their participation in an international effort to create a new framework would block their economic growth. In issuing the planned joint statement, Japan and India reached an agreement on a new framework allowing both industrial nations and developing countries to bear responsibilities according to their respective abilities.

The two countries are also expected to reach an accord on Japan's proposal to accelerate the effort to create a fundraising mechanism to assist the developing countries addressing global warming.

4) Ishiba: North Korea stalling for time, doling out concessions on nuclear issue in small doses

SANKEI (Page 5) (Excerpts)  
August 20, 2007

Appearing on Fuji TV's Hodo 2001 program Aug. 19, former Defense Agency Director General Shigeru Ishiba, National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) Chief Research Hideshi Takemi, and Sankei Shimbun's Seoul Bureau Chief Katsuhiko Kuroda discussed North Korea's nuclear and missile development issue.

-- What are your views of the North's miniaturization of atomic warheads?

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Ishiba: The North is moving ahead with it at a fairly rapid pace. If we examine from every angle last October's nuclear weapon's test by North Korea, we can't overlook the possibility that they have been successful in reaching a certain level of miniaturization. Since missile defense (MD) is not perfect, we need to drills to protect the nation and evacuate civilians. It is very dangerous to pay attention only to the optimistic arguments, such as the nuclear test being a simple failure.

Kuroda: South Korea in recent years is wrapped up in a mood of South-North reconciliation, and not only does it not harbor a sense of crisis about the (nuclear) technology (the North is developing), it has no interest in it. Basically, South Korea is optimistic because it sees (the nuclear weapons) as unconnected to it, being aimed at Japan and the United States.

Takemi: We must block North Korea from developing weapons of mass destruction through diplomatic efforts at the six-party talks. With the abduction issue also mixed into the issue, we need a national strategy that will contain North Korea's various activities, such as missile development and nuclear-warhead development.

-- Do you think that North Korea is developing highly-enriched uranium (HEU)?

Ishiba: We must consider our defense policy based on such a premise. It is vital that we put together a three pronged approach: a punitive deterrence, under which something terrible will happen if such is used; a negative deterrence, involving the deployment of MD, to make them think if they use it, it would be meaningless; and a diplomatic deterrence through diplomatic negotiations. Although the US' aim is to stop nuclear proliferation, North Korea has adopted a strategy of stalling for time by dealing out (concessions) in small doses.

5) Ryozo Kato will have served 2,124 days on Aug. 19 in current post as ambassador to US, becoming longest-serving ambassador to US in postwar period

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 18, 2007

Takashi Arimoto, Washington

Ryozo Kato will become Japan's longest-serving postwar ambassador to the United States on Aug. 19, marking 2,123 days on the 18th, tying the record set by Koichiro Asaka.

Kato was promoted to the ambassadorial post from deputy foreign minister without assuming the position of vice minister post due to the confusion in the days of Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka. He supported the US-Japan "honeymoon" under then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and President George W. Bush.

The longevity record, including the days of before the status of not being upgraded to ambassador, is held by Kogoro Takahira, serving for 2,512 days as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary and ambassador to the US. He also took part in the peace conference of the Russo-Japanese War.

According to the US Department of State, Kato was the 26th-longest serving ambassador among the ambassadors to the US as of the end of

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July, and the second-longest serving one among the ambassadors of the Group of Eight member countries.

#### 6) MSDF role important: US top brass

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 18, 2007

Visiting US Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Pace, who is at the top of all US military personnel, met Japanese reporters yesterday at the American Embassy in Akasaka, Tokyo. In a press interview, Pace, referring to the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling activities in the Indian Ocean under the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, underscored the importance and effectiveness of Japan's contributions, expressing hope that Japan will extend the law that is to expire Nov. 1.

The leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan is opposed to extending the law. The legislation is a big focus of this fall's extraordinary Diet session.

In the interview, Pace indicated that it would not be impossible for another country to take over the MSDF's refueling activities. However, Pace added that it would be "very difficult," explaining that the MSDF is handling special fuel.

In the meantime, US Ambassador to Japan Schieffer has indicated that the US government would be ready to disclose even classified information to Japanese lawmakers in order to obtain their understanding for extending the law. Touching on this fact, Pace took the position that one does not need classified information to know the importance of Japan's contributions. With this, he stressed the significance of the MSDF's refueling activities.

"To protect another country's freedom is to protect ours," Pace added. With this, he reemphasized the justification of antiterrorism operations being conducted in Afghanistan. Pace is to retire in September, and Chief of Naval Operations Mullen has been named to chair the JCS as Pace's successor.

#### 7) GSDF to quicken command, control with IT

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 20, 2007

The Ground Self-Defense Force will introduce a new system in October to command and control front troops in an effective way. The new command and control system uses information technology equipment like personal digital assistance (PDA) or personal computers. The GSDF will test the system in October and lay down a network of information for its field troops, aiming to help the GSDF quicken its transmission of enemy information and command orders. The system is modeled after the US Army's stryker brigade combat teams.

The newly planned IT system is called "radio-electronic combat support" or "ReCS" for short. The GSDF will use reconnaissance helicopters, unmanned drones, and infrared sensors to locate enemy troops. In addition, the GSDF will also use a global positioning system (GPS) to track friendly forces. This information will be integrated into a central processing unit set up at regimental headquarters to grasp the whole situation.

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A frontline platoon commander carries a PDA system and a company commander is equipped with a personal computer. Light-armed vehicles are loaded with a digital communication system to share information with their regimental headquarters. The headquarters issue orders all troops on the front. In response, the frontline troops will quickly move into action. The headquarters and frontline troops will change voice radio communications to imagery and data communications. The GSDF will use its own encryption technologies to prevent monitoring or information leakage.

#### 8) DPJ's Hosono highlights need to discuss permanent legislation on

SDF overseas missions

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 20, 2007

House of Representatives member Goshi Hosono of the major opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) appearing on a TV-Asahi program yesterday expressed his opposition to extending the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, scheduled to expire in November. He said: "I wonder if it is appropriate to make a decision on the overseas deployment of the Self-Defense Forces -- a crucial national decision -- based on a time-limited special measures law. We need a set of rules on when to deploy (SDF troops) overseas and what they should do."

Hosono apparently underlined the need for discussing a permanent law on the SDF's overseas missions.

9) Feud between Koike and Moriya settled with appointment of Masuda as vice defense minister

ASAHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)  
August 20, 2007

The government held a personnel affairs meeting on August 17 to settle a feud over who should be named the next administrative vice defense minister. As a result, the government informally decided to have Vice Defense Minister Takemasa Moriya, 62, retire and replace him with Kohei Masuda, 56, who currently heads the Personnel and Education Bureau. The appointment of Masuda is expected to be approved at a cabinet meeting on August 28. He will become the youngest person in the nation to hold the post of administrative vice defense minister. The fierce feud between Defense Minister Yuriko Koike and Vice Minister Moriya escalated into a situation involving the Kantei (Prime Minister's Official Residence), raising questions about Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's management ability as well. Given the situation, the government recognized the need to settle the situation speedily under the initiative of the Kantei.

Some in the government and ruling coalition have raised questions about Koike's responsibility for causing the turmoil. How Prime Minister Abe will treat Koike in reshuffling his cabinet on August 27 remains to be seen.

Koike had attempted to replace Moriya with Tetsuya Nishikawa, currently the head of the Defense Ministry's secretariat and a former National Police Agency official. Moriya, on the other hand, recommended Operations Planning Division Director Shinshiro Yamazaki, who has been at the ministry for his entire career. But Koike and Moriya's plans fell through in the end. Both Nishikawa and Yamazaki will retire.

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Koike, who had independently tried to replace Moriya with Nishikawa, drew fire from Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki, who chaired the personnel affairs meeting. Abe at one point intended to repeal Koike's plan and allow the new defense minister to determine Moriya's replacement after the cabinet reshuffle on August 27.

But Koike continued to lash out at Moriya, saying: "I made a call to (Mr. Moriya's) cell phone at night but he did not return my call until the following morning. This has raised questions about his crisis management capability."

Concluding that allowing the turmoil to drag on would harm the administration's momentum, Prime Minister Abe and Chief Cabinet Secretary Shiozaki discussed the matter on the phone on the morning

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of August 17 and decided to hold a personnel affairs meeting on the same day to settle the matter speedily. Based on their decision, Koike that morning sounded out Moriya on replacing him with Masuda, and Moriya agreed to it.

10) Attention being focused on prime minister's decision on whether

to keep Koike in defense chief post

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 20, 2007

Attention is being focused on whether Defense minister Yuri Koike will resign or stay on in the cabinet reshuffle on Aug. 27, in connection with the ongoing feud with Vice Defense Minister Moriya over the selection of his successor. In the government and the ruling camp, many in criticism of Moriya for putting up resistance to Koike's idea are calling for Koike remaining in office. But some in the Defense Ministry have expressed concern about a lack of her ability to do the groundwork. The key issue of an extension of the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law is high on the agenda for the extraordinary Diet session in the fall. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will be pressed to make a hard decision.

On an Asahi TV program yesterday, Liberal Democratic Party Secretary General Hidenao Nakagawa stressed his view that Koike should be kept in her post, saying: "If Ms. Koike is replaced, many might think that the prime minister, in face of resistance from the vice minister, made the decision. In such a case, the situation will be upset."

Nakagawa criticized Moriya, remarking: "The outgoing vice minister raised resistance. This is the most serious problem." Appearing on the Fuji TV program "Hoodoo 2001" yesterday, former Defense Agency Director General Shigeru Ishiba also defended Koike, saying: "The minister has the right of personnel management. The administrative vice minister is a Self-Defense Force (SDF) member, so even if he is dissatisfied with the minister's decision, he must submit to civilian control." Koike had initially desired to appoint Tetsuya Nishikawa to be vice minister. Ishiba evaluated this idea to some extent, saying: "This might be a personnel appointment based on thorough consideration."

Should Koike be replaced only less than two months after coming into office, her replacement will unavoidably give the impression that the cabinet minister vested with the right of personnel management was pressed to take responsibility for the row caused by a bureaucrat's resistance. Even so, there is criticism of the means

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Koike employed. Former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, a member of the Machimura faction, to which Koike and Nakagawa also belong, said in a TV program on Aug. 17: "Her deed is similar to striking with a sword from behind at a person who was about to commit hara-kiri. That was undesirable." LDP Upper House Policy Council Chairman Yoichi Masuzoe also posed a question on Aug. 18 about the appointment of Koike as defense minister. He said: "Since she was not familiar with personnel relations (within the Defense Ministry), the feud took place."

A senior member of the Defense Ministry commented: "Now I feel that we are beneath a deep blue sky after a heavy rain cloud disappeared." But this member also expressed his anxiety about Koike's abilities as defense minister, saying: "Ms. Koike has criticized Democratic Party of Japan President Ichiro Ozawa, who has opposed to an extension of the Antiterrorism Law, but even if she speaks before reporters earnestly, it will not be easy to have the bill pass the Diet."

Kohei Masuda, personnel education bureau director general of the ministry, has been tapped to replace Moriya. He will attend the extraordinary Diet session without making preparations. If Koike stays on, the party will have to urgently strengthen its unity under the aim of having the Antiterrorism Law extended beyond its expiration.

11) Prime Minister Abe formally announces cabinet reshuffle will occur on Aug. 27

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Full)  
August 20, 2007

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe formally announced yesterday that he would

reshuffle the cabinet and Liberal Democratic Party executive posts on Aug. 27. When asked by reporters whether he decided to reshuffle on the 27th, Abe responded: "I would like to basically think of it in that direction. I'm now thinking thoroughly about it. I want to consider various aspects." He was replying to questions by the reporters in front of his official residence prior to his departure for three Asian countries.

12) Prime minister to modify "beautiful country concept" to reflect livelihood issues after LDP defeat in Upper House election

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 20, 2007

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has started looking into modifying his slogan of making Japan into a "beautiful country." During the July House of Councillors' election campaign, the concept met criticism, with many claiming that its meaning was unclear. As a result, his party suffered a crushing defeat in the election. He put his political ideals into this concept, but the prime minister now intends to include livelihood-friendly measures in the concept.

Even candidates backed by the Liberal Democratic Party for the Upper House election severely criticized the beautiful country concept, one grumbling: "I feel like I'm being ridiculed." In contrast to livelihood-oriented policies stressed by candidates supported by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), LDP-backed candidates felt that the beautiful country concept was out of tune with the people's awareness. The prime minister has also hardly referred to the

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concept since the Upper House election.

The "beautiful country" defined by the prime minister (in his policy speech last September) is a country (1) valuing culture and tradition; (2) being a free society in principle; and (3) having energy for potential growth; and (4) being trusted by the international community. Based on this concept, the government translated education reconstruction policies into practice over the opposition of the opposition bloc.

Despite the LDP's devastating defeat in the Upper House election, the prime minister said: "I do not think that the voters rejected my reform direction." The prime minister, though, seems to have judged it necessary to reflect livelihood-related policies in the concept. Special Advisor Hiroshige Seko, in charge of promoting the government's project on creating a beautiful country, also stressed the need to rewrite the concept, reflecting ordinary citizens' point of view.

The Prime Minister's Office is reviewing the concept, based on about 3,500 letters of proposal sent to the project team. The prime minister will announce the revised version when his cabinet is reorganized.

13) Nakagawa urges problematic lawmakers not to join new cabinet

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)  
August 20, 2007

Liberal Democratic Party Secretary General Hidenao Nakagawa appearing on a TV-Asahi program yesterday made this comment about the planned cabinet reshuffle: "It is essential to appoint persons who have been following clear rules on politics and money and can explain matters appropriately. They must examine themselves and those whose accounts are not clear have no other option but to step back voluntarily." Nakagawa thus urged lawmakers to reexamine their political funds reports and to remove from consideration those who have found problems with their reports.

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